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Final Rail Enhancement Fund Projects Approved for Funding
12 projects could remove more than 2 million cars and nearly 1 million trucks from Virginia's roads, saving over 17 million gallons of fuel per year

RICHMOND, Va., December 15, 2005— The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) today received approval from the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) for a final package of rail improvement projects and studies that, upon completion, could save approximately 17,750,885 gallons of fuel per year. These projects would also remove 2,046,400 million cars and 965,200 trucks from Virginia's roads each year.

As a whole, these projects will receive \$23.2 million in Rail Enhancement Funds in FY06, \$18.3 million in FY07 and \$11.9 million in FY08. A total of \$84.4 million in total project costs will be invested in rail improvements for Virginia through this first round of funding. All projects will be funded on a reimbursement basis.

DRPT Director Karen Rae said, "These projects will deliver substantial value for money for the entire transportation system in Virginia. For example, just a few of these projects will have the combined effect of removing 200,000 additional trucks per year from Virginia's roads in 2007 and two to three million additional trucks per year by 2025, providing congestion relief and highway maintenance cost savings."

The selected projects and studies will, upon completion, provide passenger and freight rail improvements across a wide geographic area of the Commonwealth, spanning from the Appalachian region in the west to Northern Virginia, Central Virginia, and Southeastern Virginia from Hampton Roads down to the Virginia/North Carolina border.

The following 12 final projects and studies were identified; studies are underlined:

- APM/Maersk Terminals Rail Yard Expansion
- Charlottesville Connecting Track Upgrade
- Commonwealth Railway Line Purchase
- Heartland Corridor- Virginia Components
- Intermodal Improvements- Crewe to Suffolk
- North Acca Yard Switches
- Richmond Port Passenger/Freight Improvements Study
- Portsmouth Subdivision Height Clearances
- Suffolk Connection from CSX to Commonwealth Railway
- VA/NC Passenger Rail EIS
- VRE Cherry Hill Station & Third Track (funding is for preliminary engineering work)
- VRE Gainesville-Haymarket Extension Feasibility Study

(more)

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For more information about each project, visit <http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/projects/current/rail-fund.aspx> and click on Description of Final Projects FY2006. Each project description includes a summary of the public benefits that the project will provide for the Commonwealth.

Applications for funding were accepted from September 20, 2005 through October 21, 2005. To view a summary of these applications, visit <http://www.drpt.virginia.gov/projects/current/rail-fund.aspx>.

About the Rail Enhancement Fund

The Rail Enhancement Fund was advanced by Governor Warner with bipartisan support in the 2005 General Assembly session. Enacted on July 1, 2005, it provides approximately \$23 million in annual, dedicated funding for passenger or freight rail improvements in Virginia. The source of funding is the state portion of the passenger rental car tax. Each project requires a minimum 30% match and proof of public benefits.

About DRPT

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) facilitates the movement of people and goods throughout Virginia. DRPT operates through three main areas of activity- rail, public transportation and commuter services- that promote congestion relief, economic development and mobility. We help people and businesses find the smartest distance between two points. Visit us at www.drpt.virginia.gov.

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